



With Author's signature

FAT LANDS

FOR LEAN TILLERS.

A Lecture.

BY

JOSEPH FORSTER,

Author of "Acres and Achers," "Bumbles, Drones, and Working Bees," &c.

DELIVERED AT THE PROGRESSIVE CLUB, NOTTING HILL, LONDON; AT THE
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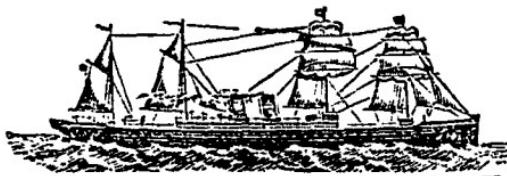
Author of "Acres and Achers," "Bumbles, Drones, and Working Bees," &c.

A PARALLEL.

EVERYBODY who has ever read it remembers Carlyle's famous description of the workhouse of St. Ives, in Huntingdonshire, and what the picturesque tourist saw: "I saw sitting on wooden benches, in front of their Bastile, and within their ringwall and its railings, some half-hundred or more of these men. Tall robust figures, young mostly, or of middle age; of honest countenance, many of them thoughtful and even intelligent-looking men. They sat there, near by one another, but in a kind of torpor, and especially in a silence which was very striking. In silence; for, alas! what word was to be said? An earth all lying round crying, Come and till me, come and reap me; yet we here sit enchanted! In the eyes and brows of these men hung the gloomiest expression, not of anger, but of grief and shame and manifold inarticulate distress and weariness. They returned my glance with a glance that seemed to say, 'Do not look at us, we sit enchanted here we know not why. The sun shines and the earth calls, and, by the governing powers and importance of this England, we are forbidden to obey. It is impossible, they tell us!' There was something that reminded me of Dante's hell in the look of all this; and I ro[ad] swiftly away." An exactly similar scene may be witnessed any night by a tourist, picturesque or otherwise, who finds his way to the House of Commons. There they are, moody and listless on their benches, flitting aimlessly hither and thither from corridor to corridor, sauntering through the tea-room, idling in the smoking-room, all at their wits' ends how to get through the dreary hours, and hoping against hope that the morrow may break the horrid spell. And so "many of them thoughtful and even intelligent-looking men."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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FAT LANDS FOR LEAN TILLERS.

I WILL begin my lecture by reading the following letter of mine which appeared in *London Canadian*, of August 23rd, in reply to one received from a man who has done more than any other living person to raise the condition of the agricultural labourer :—

Dear Sir,—Thanks for your letter. Singular to say, what you write to me, I said to the editor of the *London Canadian*, when he first tried to interest me in the great question of emigration to the North-West of Canada. You truly say we want the men here. But while the horrible feudal land laws are being reformed—and it will take years to make a cosmos of such a chaos—the poor labourers—and none know it better than you—are literally starving. It is the enormous supply of food from abroad which is bringing things to a crisis here, by reducing rents on every hand.

Under our land laws it is impossible to compete with the supply of food shipped from America. The way to a fool's brain is through his belly. Even the man who preserves partridges and shoots pigeons, when he finds that his income has not only dried up, but that he is minus a few thousands a year, must consent to a reform of the land laws, or starve. What an absurdity it appears, that thousands of labourers should look vainly here for a job, starving in the meantime, when there are millions of acres waiting for their strong arms in British America.

These men leave their cruel stepmother, England, shaking the dust from their feet, and cursing her name ; but a few years' prosperity in the North-West will take the venom out of their hearts, and they will be ready to help those left behind, by preparing homes and work for them. How can a man with a wolf in his stomach love his country or any living being ?

There is enough for all the labourers in England to do, if the land were available for their labour. But while the noble but limp landlord pretends to own 30,000 acres, and has not capital enough for 3,000, 27,000 acres are lying fallow, which under our idiotic land laws, he, the nominal owner, is not allowed to sell. We, I include you and all sensible men, want, if necessary, to compel him to sell what he cannot use, and while that is being done, to induce all men, who can afford to leave the country, to do so, and thus enable the poorer labourers to get the little work there is to be done, at better wages, through thus reducing the competition.

Poets are often, in fact, usually prophets. When Charles Mackay sang “To the West—to the West !” he knew nothing

of Manitoba and the British North-West, with their hundred million acres of the most fertile land in the world—land producing an average of 30 bushels of corn to the acre—land to be had for the asking, too; had he done so, he would not only have sung, I think he would have danced also. What a prospect for the poor, half-starved agricultural labourer; aye, and for the poor, half-starved farmer too; and I might say for the limp, listless, game-preserving, pigeon-shooting landlord, who has to pay heavy mortgages and settlements, out of hardly any residue of rent. It is, you must admit, very difficult, even for a clever man, with a nominal rent-roll of £30,000 a year, whose mortgages, &c., amount to £20,000, and whose actual rent receipts only reach £15,000 instead of £30,000, to make both ends meet. It is rather hard lines not only to have nothing to live upon, but to be minus £5,000 a year. Under these conditions my Lord finds that partridge breeding, and even the heroic practice of pigeon shooting, lose their old charms. He has preserved his game, but now cruel fate seems to be making game of him; turned out his tenants, who had the impudence to claim some of their own property; asserted his feudal privileges, but has lost his income. I really feel sorry for him, and would like to help him. Manitoba opens her hospitable arms even to the “partridge breeder of a thousand years.” Let him try the new world; he can’t spoil it, and it may mend him. Let him turn over a new leaf. I don’t believe he is a bad fellow at bottom. He has only lived in a fool’s paradise too long, and got acclimatised. But he has an English heart, and, I believe, something like a backbone somewhere. There is plenty of hunting and shooting; aye, even better and manlier sport than pigeon shooting itself. His lordship can lead a jolly, out-of-doors, manly life. Let him help us to alter our idiotic land laws so that he can sell his white elephant of an estate, and buy a few thousand acres in the Land of the West, where, when you tickle the black and fertile soil, it laughs with crops of corn, barley, and oats. As to the tenants and labourers, whose capital and sweat the noble lord has absorbed and squandered, they will forgive him his crass folly, and work with him on a footing of manly equality and mutual interest.

Just try to imagine a place nearly as big as Europe, with room

for 150,000,000 and only 4,000,000 there! Such is British North America. Talk about the imagination of a poet; the plain fact surpasses the wildest visions of the most sublime poet!

Let me here introduce a few hard facts about the extent of the country, the climate, the crops, and the infinite possibilities of this new world. In this beautifully governed old land of ours, we have about one million paupers. These poor victims of bad laws, by the glorious alchemy of free land and the demand for every kind of manual labour, can be turned into independent and honest men. No touching the hat there with servile scrape to every man with a cloth coat. There the man who can't work touches his hat to the man who can, that is if he can afford a hat. There is room there for women, although I shall be sorry to lose any of them. Instead of about five women to one man, and he too often a poor washed-out fellow; although that is not his fault, poor chap! there are five robust, well-fed, gritty men to one woman. So that if any of my lady readers believe in woman's rights to men's adoration, as I do, she should go to Manitoba. The women, especially the good-looking ones, can pick and choose from fifty admirers, who don't believe in long engagements. If there are any plain women here, and, in my humble opinion, no good-tempered woman is plain, they too, if they can't pick one out of fifty can select the best of any five. Women don't make much fuss about a vote there; they have too much bread to bake, too much meat to cook, too many babies to wash, to trouble about that. But I think they have a little to do with their husband's votes.

Now, as to the demand for women in the North-West, what do you think of the following copied from a Canadian paper? Between you and me, I think my friend the editor, or a friend of his, has touched it up a little here and there. But that opinion is confidential. The paragraph actually appeared in a Canadian paper.

"The following strikes us as amusing: 'The Cry is: Still They Don't Come. Girls of Ontario, come West! come West! We have in our town many eligibles. The first comer can choose between a thin lawyer, a stout doctor, a retired but not retiring merchant, and one still in business. All are warranted docile, and tired of a life of single unblissedness.'"

Since the addition of the North-Western Territories, of which Manitoba forms so important a part, the extent of the Dominion exceeds the area of the United States by 12,800,000 acres. More extraordinary still, it nearly equals in dimensions the whole of Europe. The area of the whole continent of Europe is about 3,900,000 square miles, and the extent of the Dominion is 3,530,000 square miles. And there is one important fact to remember, that the 3,530,000 square miles in Canada is virgin and not exhausted soil, while the European land is nearly as much played out as the military despotisms which are driving all the people away, who do not believe that pride and pipeclay are the only true divinities ; and that the truculent Bismarck is high priest.

Why, in the Canadian North-West alone, there are about 100,000,000 acres of good land, capable of producing about 30 bushels of corn to the acre, while the average yield in the United States is now 15 to the acre. Some people say it is more difficult and expensive to get this produce to the English market. Not a bit of it. The distance is less from Montreal to Liverpool, than from New York to Liverpool, and the former will be the future great shipping port for wheat from the North-West.

From Port Moody, the terminus of the Canadian Pacific railway (over 700 miles of which, into the heart of the grain growing district, counting both sections, are now finished), to Montreal is 410 miles nearer than from Port Moody to New York ; and it is 481 miles further from San Francisco to New York, than from Port Moody to Montreal. Now that the Canadian Pacific Railway is finished west of Montreal to Thunder Bay on Lake Superior, there is direct water and railway communication between Montreal and the grain fields of the North-West. Already wheat has been carried from Winnipeg, *via* the United States, at 30 cents per bushel, or 2 dollars 40 cents per quarter. From Montreal to Liverpool, add, say, one dollar, which brings the cost of carrying wheat from Winnipeg to Liverpool to about 14s. a quarter. So that the carriage of wheat from the North-West costs less than from the United States, and even if it should cost a little more, as in the former place the soil produces a far larger yield, not to speak of the quality, which is worth more in the market than United States

wheat, the advantage on the side of the British North-West is enormous.

For these reasons, when one reads in one of the London monetary papers that it would cost seven bushels to carry one of wheat from the British North-West to England, it is charitable to fancy that the writer does not know what he is writing about, and not that he is intentionally deceiving the public.

A few words on the crops raised in the North-West, without a farthing being spent in manure. Enquiries among the farmers produced the following statement : Oats average 60, and in some cases even 80 bushels to the acre. Barley averages 40, and 70 bushels have been reaped from one acre of land. Peas reach about 38, and rye 40 bushels the acre, while potatoes show in some cases the extraordinary yield of 600 bushels, but average 300 bushels an acre. In root crops, the average for turnips is 100; carrots, 300; while onions reach as high as 270 bushels. In cultivated grasses, the yield is $2\frac{1}{2}$ to three tons an acre, but owing to the abundance of prairie hay it is not grown to any great extent. These wonderful results of the not most careful farming, because most of the farmers are poor men with limited appliances, are produced without any manure. *Crops have been grown there for 40 years without manure.* In fact, the soil is so rich that manure does more harm than good, and such will be the case for many years to come. The facts stated above are gathered from practical men, and taken from districts as far north as Cumberland House, and as far west as Edmonton.

Now, as to the climate. It is astonishing to simple people how much pleasure some persons find in labouring to do evil. Great pains have been taken to represent the climate of the Canadian North-West as utterly unsuited for settlement. An article—called by courtesy a leading article—in a London newspaper, in reference to a Canadian winter, said it lasted seven months. In London it often lasts longer, and is followed by little or no summer to speak of. This statement was utterly false, as winter in the North-West commences between the middle and end of November, and lasts till March, a little more than four months. Farmers frequently begin ploughing during the latter days of March, and rarely later than the beginning of April. When they do, it is called a very late spring. Now for

the severity of the weather. The cold is sharp as long as it lasts, but the air being dry, it is much less trying than cold, raw, damp air, accompanied by a north-easter, not to mention our horrible London fog, which literally chokes, by congesting the lungs of delicate people. The air is dry, pure, and wonderfully exhilarating. The snow, hard and crisp, delightful to walk on, does not generally fall in large quantities, although there are, as here, heavy snowstorms, but the snowfall is more than balanced by the bright warm sun. Much has been written about "blizzards," which are simply severe snowstorms, but in spite of the highly-coloured accounts given of their disastrous effects, we know right well that persons who have suffered have done so through their own carelessness. Such people will suffer something or other wherever they go; or if they remain at home. The seasons then are as follows: Spring—April and May; Summer—June, July, August; Autumn—September, October, and part of November; Winter—part of November, December, January, February, and March. The spring is clear and dry, the summer warm, with cool nights, and the autumn balmy and wonderfully pleasant. Such delightful weather is entirely unknown in this country. The climate being so free from damp, consumptive patients are sent there from the States, and, as a rule, are cured, if a cure is possible.

STRAWBERRIES v. ICE.

Apropos of climate the following is interesting: According to the Toronto *Globe* the crop of strawberries was not quite up to the average. Still, they were so plentiful that they were sold for six cents per box. Pears, apples, cherries, raspberries, and black currants have yielded well. This, to those who believe in the Siberian weather of the North-West of Canada, will be rather surprising news.

THE CHICAGO OF CANADA.

Now a few words about the Chicago of Canada—Winnipeg. I venture to call it the lively Peg. The growth of this town has been something extraordinary, even for such a wonderful country as the North-West of Canada.

Although Winnipeg might base itself upon its position, an

unique one, as a real estate market, its other sources of strength are nearly as unequalled. It is, in the first place, already the greatest railway centre in the Dominion ; as such it will require immense car works and rolling mills ; these will form the nucleus of unnumbered workshops of every kind. Then, think of the millions of acres of fertile soil stretching away to the base of the Rocky Mountains ; and try to imagine—although one must admit that is impossible—the myriads of ploughs, seeders, reapers, and other implements of agriculture required. Again, the men who are to drive these ploughs will require good brick and stone houses : then arises the demand for thousands of carpenters, bricklayers, stonemasons, locksmiths ; not to mention the demand for millions of bricks, and, therefore, brickmakers, planing mills, and carpenters' shops. There is no danger, in this new and wonderful country, of the labour market being glutted. Living labour here is the respected because necessary adjunct of dead capital. There is no risk, no doubt about it. Labour is sure of its reward, and, when united with brains and sobriety, that reward will be worth having. Many men who feel inclined to drink through breathing the fetid air in some close London street, will altogether lose the morbid craving for stimulants resulting from such surroundings, when they breathe the clear, bracing air of the North-West. As a clever man once said, “it is easy for those to do well who are well to do.” So that if any of my friends here study too much for the bar or at the bar, and feel that its fascinations are too much for them ; and, considering the circumstances, I don’t wonder at it, let them go where the air is like a subtle wine, bracing up muscles, nerves, and brain.

A few more words about Winnipeg and the surrounding country. The following facts are culled from the Canadian papers :—

MORE LIGHTS.

We learn that another Manitoba Electric Light and Power Co. have applied to the Governor-General for an incorporating charter. This looks promising, and will astonish some people who think, or pretend to think, and try to make others who don’t think believe, that the North-West of Canada is a benighted, frozen-out-end-of-the-world sort of place.

CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY.

The custom duties collected at the port of Winnipeg, last month, amounted to nearly double those collected in the corresponding month of 1881. The figures are: July, 1881, \$111,221; July, 1882, \$227,274.

THE LIVELY PEG.

Winnipeg appears to be a lively town. She has changed from a tented field to a big city. Elegant family mansions are elevating their chimneys in all directions. Business blocks are getting into the hands of sharp business men, who intend to make things boom, and no mistake. The pretty little sum of \$5,000,000 is still to be spent on buildings this season. What were suburbs now form part of the city, and new suburbs are being formed, which in time will also be included in this rapidly increasing town. No wonder bricklayers, carpenters, painters, blacksmiths, moulders, gasfitters, in fact, all useful working-men are paid from 12s. to 16s. a day. Why, mere labourers employed on the Canadian Pacific Railway works are getting 8s. and upwards a day. Here it is hard work and half starve, or don't work and quite starve. In the North-West of Canada the people prefer

WORK, GOOD PAY, AND SOME PLAY.

We are glad to learn that the crops on the Brandon Hills and in the Souris valley are magnificent. The area under crops is immensely increased. The blue hills of Brandon seem to be thoroughly appreciated by the settlers, who are continually picnicing there. People there don't like all work and no pay; they prefer work, play, and good pay, and get them too.

Now, I hope you are all in a good temper, and prepared to listen to a lot of dry facts—no! they are not dry facts, they are eloquent in the highest degree—about Manitoba. First, let me quote the opinion of a semi-royal prince—we all love princes here, even half a one; then Dr. Bryce's letter, which appeared in the well-written, gritty *Scotsman*; then Professor Sheldon, of the College of Agriculture, Salisbury; then a letter from Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, as to the kind of labour most in demand: a very important thing for you to know. The Hon.

Sir Alexander Galt, G.C.M.G., the High Commissioner for Canada in England, records his views of the country. I will also quote Lord Dufferin, and the Hon. H. Seward, late U.S. Minister for Foreign Affairs. Then, if I have not quite exhausted your kind attention, I will sum up the case from my own point of view, only begging you very earnestly to study the matter for yourselves ; for those who go there not only help themselves, but help those who remain behind by removing competitors in the labour market.

The following are extracts from His Excellency Earl Dufferin's remarks at Winnipeg in 1877 :—

From its geographical position, and its peculiar characteristics, Manitoba may be regarded as the keystone of that mighty arch of sister provinces which spans the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was here that Canada, emerging from her woods and forests, first gazed upon her rolling prairies and unexplored North-West, and learnt, as by an unexpected revelation, that her historical territories of the Canadas, her eastern sea-boards of New Brunswick, Labrador, and Nova Scotia, her Laurentian lakes and valleys, corn lands and pastures, though themselves more extensive than half-a-dozen European kingdoms, were but the vestibules and antechambers to that till then undreamt of Dominion whose illimitable dimensions alike confound the arithmetic of the surveyors and the verification of the explorer.

It was hence that, counting her past achievements as but the preface and prelude to her future exertions and expanding destinies, she took a fresh departure, received the afflatus of a more imperial inspiration, and felt herself no longer a mere settler along the banks of a single river, but the owner of half a continent, and in the magnitude of her possessions, in the wealth of her resources, in the sinews of her material might, the peer of any power on earth.

The experience of the wheat-raisers in Manitoba has now been of sufficient length to make understood some of the natural advantages extended to this country for returning large and certain crops. . . . But most noteworthy is the soil itself—an alluvial black loam, with an average depth of twenty inches, resting on a subsoil of clay. . . . Dropped into this soil, with the other favouring circumstances, seed springs up and grows with an extraordinary vigour, and gives a sound and abundant crop. The average yield of wheat per acre in the Red River Valley, north of Fargo, where the soil becomes heavier and more characteristic, is twenty-three bushels. In Manitoba and the Saskatchewan region the average is greater, and amounts to twenty-eight bushels. These facts become more striking when compared with results in the district of the wheat-supply at present. In Illinois the average for wheat to the acre is seventeen bushels; in Iowa ten; in Wisconsin less than ten; in Kansas ten; while in Texas it is eight and one-half bushels. Nor does the land

seem to deteriorate under a course of cropping, as does the lighter soil of States in the south.—*Harper's Magazine, September, 1881.*

Well might the late Hon. William Seward, whilst Prime Minister of the United States, write thus his impressions of Canada (**that region nearly equalling in size all Europe**, which even many of us have looked on as the fag-end of America, a waste bit of the world) : "Hitherto, in common with most of my countrymen, as I suppose, I have thought Canada a mere strip lying north of the United States, easily detached from the parent State, but incapable of sustaining itself, and therefore ultimately, nay, right soon, to be taken on by the Federal Union, without materially changing or affecting its own development. I have dropped the opinion as a national conceit. I see in British North America, stretching as it does across the Continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in its wheat-fields of the West, its invaluable fisheries, and its mineral wealth, a region grand enough for the seat of a great empire."—*Mr. R. G. Webster, LL.B., at the Royal Colonial Institute, November 22nd, 1881.*

This Winnipeg, the capital, is at the junction of the Assiniboine and Red River of the North. I think it is the St. Louis of the North from the fact that it collects at its wharves the navigation of the Red River of the North, 800 miles ; Assiniboine, 500 miles ; the Saskatchewan, 1,100 miles, and of Lake Manitoba, 300 miles. It is the commercial centre of a great fertile basin, extending from the north end of Lake Manitoba to the source of the Red River on the south ; from the Lake of the Woods on the east to 1,000 miles west of Winnipeg.—*St Louis Republican.*

TESTIMONY OF THE MARQUIS OF LORNE AND EARL DUFFERIN UPON MANITOBA AND THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

The following are extracts from the speech of His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne at Winnipeg, 10th October, 1881 :—

Unknown a few years ago, except for some differences which had arisen amongst its people, we see Winnipeg now with a population unanimously joining in happy concord and rapidly lifting it to the front rank amongst the commercial centres of the world. We may look elsewhere in vain for a situation so favourable and so commanding, many as are the fair regions of which we can boast. There may be some among you before whose eyes the whole wonderful panorama of our provinces has passed. You may know the ocean garden island of Prince Edward, the magnificent valleys of the St. John, and the marvellous country, the home of "Evangeline," where Blomedon looks down on the tides of the Fundy, and over tracts of red soil, richer than the Weald of Kent. You may have seen the fortified paradise of Quebec, and Montreal, whose prosperity and beauty is worthy of her great St. Lawrence, and you may have admired the well-wrought and splendid province of Ontario, and rejoiced at the growth of her capital Toronto ; and yet nowhere will you find a site whose natural advantages promise so great a

future as that which seems insured to Manitoba and to Winnipeg, the "heart city" of our Dominion. The measureless meadows which commence here stretch without interruption of their good soil westward to your boundary. The province is a green sea over which the summer winds pass laden with the scent of rich grasses and flowers, and over this vast extent it is only as yet here and there that a yellow patch shows some gigantic wheat-field. Like a great net cast over the whole are the bands and clumps of poplar which are everywhere to be met with, and which no doubt, when the prairie fires are more carefully guarded against, will wherever they are wanted still further adorn the landscape. The meshes of this wood netting are never further than twenty or thirty miles apart. Little bay swamps and sparkling lakelets teeming with wild fowl are always close at hand; and if the surface water in some of these has alkali, excellent water can always be had in others, and by the simple process of digging for it a short distance beneath the sod with a spade, the soil being so devoid of stones that it is not even necessary to use a pick.

* * * * *

There was not one person who had manfully faced the first difficulties, always far less than those to be encountered in the older provinces, but said that he was getting on well, and he was glad he had come, and he generally added that "he believed his bit of the country must be the best," and that he only wished his friends could have the same good fortune, for his expectations were more than realised.

* * * * *

At Calgary, a place interesting at the present time, as likely to be on that Pacific Railway line which will connect you with the Pacific and give you access to "that vast shore beyond the furthest sea," the shore of Asia, a good many small herds of cattle have been introduced within the last few years. During this year a magnificent herd of between six and seven thousand has been brought in; and the men who attend them, and who come from Montana, Oregon, and Texas, all averred that their opinion of their new ranch was higher than that of any with which they had been acquainted in the South. Excellent crops have been raised by men who had sown, not only in the river bottoms, but upon the so-called benchlands or plateaux above. This testimony was also given by others on the way to Fort McLeod, thus closing most satisfactorily the song of praise we had heard from practical men throughout our whole journey of 1,200 miles.

* * * * *

You have a country whose value it would be insanity to question, and which, to judge from the emigration taking place from our other provinces, will be indissolubly linked with them. It must support a vast population. If I may calculate from the progress we have already made, in comparison with our neighbours, we shall have no reason to fear further comparison with them, on the areas now open to us. We have now four million four hundred thousand people; and these, with the exception of the comparatively small numbers as yet in this province, are restricted to the old area; yet for the last ten years our increase has been over eighteen per cent., whereas during the same period all the New England States taken together

have shown an increase only of fifteen per cent. In the last thirty years in Ohio the increase has been sixty-one per cent. Ontario has seen during that space of time one hundred and one per cent. of an increase; while Quebec has increased fifty-two per cent., Manitoba in ten years has increased two hundred and eighty-nine per cent., a greater rate than any hitherto attained, and, to judge from this year's experience, is likely to increase to an even more wonderful degree during the following decade. Statistics are at all times wearisome, but are not these full of hope?

After the opinion of the Marquis of Lorne, who is rather too big and magnificent a person for you and me to feel at home with, let me quote a letter from Patrick Barrett, who left Ballinasloe in April, and whose letter appeared in the *London Canadian* of August 23rd. Patrick states that he can earn in three days what it would take him a fortnight to make in Ireland, and that he can live for considerably less. But here is the letter:—

The voyage out is not half so bad as many imagine. After a day or so you get better, and then you feel in far better health than before. We duly arrived in Point Levis (Quebec), where we were met by the Government Agent, Mr. Stafford, who gave us every information, and sent us on to Ottawa. Here we were met by Mr. Wills, who treated us very kindly, and gave us our choice of different jobs. There were about 30 or 40 of us by this time, but he could have found employment for ten times as many. I and my comrades, three in number, took it as our choice to work in a saw mill in Arnprior, where we arrived that evening, and started work next morning; and now, after working there for over two months, I can say I like it every day more and more, as do my comrades.

I can earn in three days here what it would take me a fortnight to earn in Ireland; and the board I pay \$3 (12s. 6d.) a week here for would cost at least £1 at home; so that anybody can see I have made a fortunate change. Now I would advise any young man or woman who have to work for their living in the old country to come out here, and they will never regret it.

Any young man coming here, and willing to work, need not be afraid of being out of a job for five minutes, except through his own fault. There is plenty of work for as many more, if they come here, on railways, lumber yards, buildings, and farms. Another grand feature of this country is that one man is as good as another. There is none of that false pride that separates class from class in the old country.

If this should reach the eye of any young man or woman, who are undecided where to go, I trust it will be the means of inducing them to come to Canada, as I feel confident if they come they will never regret the step they have taken. And any young man coming out, and having no particular place to come to, let him come to Arnprior, and I will be happy to find him work.

Hoping, Mr. Editor, you will kindly insert the above in your valuable paper, and apologising for its length,—I remain, &c.,

Arnprior, Ont., Canada.

PATE BARRETT.

PROFESSOR SHELDON, THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, DOWNTON,
SALISBURY, ENGLAND.

I was much surprised to find among the Manitoban farmers one of my old Cirencester pupils. He had bought a farm of some 400 acres a few miles west of Winnipeg, paying, as was thought, the extravagant price of 20 dollars (£4) an acre. He declared, however, to me that he had the best farm in the locality, which may be taken as evidence of his being satisfied with it; and he was growing crops of turnips, potatoes, oats, &c., which were already a theme of conversation in the Province; this was done by better cultivation than the land of Manitoba is used to, and it is clear that the soil will produce almost any kind of crop in a very satisfactory way, providing it is properly attended to. And yet, how can we expect the rank and file of farmers to cultivate the soil carefully in a country which has such a superb abundance of magnificent land still unoccupied? In time, no doubt, better farming will prevail, and I hope my old pupil will set an example which will be worth extensive imitation; but at present land is too cheap and plentiful to admit of microscopic cultivation as we have it in England and Scotland.

PROFESSOR SHELDON, THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, DOWNTON,
SALISBURY.

The soil of Manitoba is a purely vegetable loam, black as ink, and ful of organic matter, in some places many feet thick, and resting on the alluvial drift of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. It is of course extremely rich in the chief elements of plant-food, and cannot easily be exhausted; the farmers know this, so they take all they can out of it in the shortest possible time, and return nothing whatever to it in the form of manure. By turning up an inch or two of fresh soil now and again, the fertility of the surface is renewed, and the same exhaustive system of growing wheat, year by year, may be pursued for a long period with impunity. It is true, in fact, that for several of the first years, at all events, manuring the soil would do much more harm than good.

The following extracts from a letter from the Rev. Dr. Bryce. of Winnipeg, upon the climate of Manitoba, which appeared in the Edinburgh *Scotsman* of October 19, 1881, will be read with interest:—

Edinburgh, October 14, 1881.

Sir,—Last week I wrote a short letter on Manitoba, and, in answer to certain queries about the climate of that province, now wish to write a few lines. A very common delusion exists as to the exact position of Winnipeg. Winnipeg is situated on latitude 50° N., while Edinburgh, being about 57 deg., is several hundreds of miles nearer the region of polar ice than Winnipeg. To those who have read the old books in which Toronto, somewhere about 44° N., is stated to be in the midst of a hyperborean region, it is no surprise to find Winnipeg falling heir to the same unenviable reputation. It is quite true that latitude has not all to do with the matter, but it has surely something to do with it. The very modifying influence



that brings with it a milder climate to Britain, carries with it one very important element of discomfort—viz., moisture. The Manitoba winter is exceedingly dry, and, in consequence, there is no impression made on the body by low states of temperature, which in a moist climate would be unbearable. The absence of moisture also preserves a steady continuance of one kind of weather, very much for our comfort. It is well known that it is the rapid change—one day bright, the next wet, one day frosty, the next muggy—that is so trying to the body. . . .

The dryness of the climate and the clear air are taken advantage of frequently by consumptives, who come from other parts of America and are cured. I can name several persons of my acquaintance who, on coming to the country, were said to be far advanced in consumption, and who have now recovered. The dry, clear air gives an elasticity to the frame, noticed by all who visit the North-West. As to the sensation of cold, I have stood outside with hands and face uncovered, and throat bare, looking at the thermometer registering ten degrees below zero, and have had no feeling of discomfort whatever. It is in my recollection of having driven my sleigh to a country parish about fifteen miles from Winnipeg on a Christmas day, and of having been engaged in visiting from house to house all the day with the thermometer standing at 40 deg. below zero. The horse was left outside in most cases, simply having the buffalo robe thrown over him, and suffered nothing; while myself and driver, though going in and out from cold to hot and hot to cold, felt no inconvenience.

Herds of horses were formerly kept by the old settlers, which lived out the winter through. I have seen horses which had been born on the prairie, and had reached six or seven years of age without ever being under a roof. Cattle, so far as the cold is concerned, can live outside during the whole winter; but they must have the company of horses, which can break the snow-crust for them, to allow the dry grass beneath to be obtained. It is not, of course, to be inferred from this that farmers now allow their horses and cattle to go unhoused for the winter. What can be done, and what it is best to do, are different things. The winter sets in about the middle of November; until early in January the weather is often dark and stormy, and in December the coldest weather generally comes. In January, as the common expression goes, "the back of the winter is broken," and there is for two or three months after that a most brilliant unclouded sky almost continuously. So strong is the sun in its reflection from the snow, that farmers and those much out in the open air protect their eyes with green gauze, close spectacles, and the like. In March, or early in April, the snow passes away, and spring is at once present—if, indeed, there be a spring at all, so soon does summer follow in its wake. It has been my experience to see the country with the snow gone and most balmy weather on 31st March in several different years, and on two years of the last ten in the middle of March. The snowfall of the North-West is comparatively light. One and a half or two feet may be taken as the average depth over the ten years just past. Some persons met on this side of the Atlantic seem to regard four and a half or five months of winter as very long. The cessation of all work in the fields seems to make British agriculturists think with such a season farming can scarcely be carried on. On the other hand, the North-West winter is found quite short enough for all the work

to be done in it. The grain must, much of it, be then threshed. The great facilities for transport afforded by the sleighing, by means of which enormous loads can be taken, are used for drawing wood, cutting and drawing fencing materials, and collecting timber, stone, lime, &c., for building—similar work to what, so far as circumstances require it, I suspect, is relegated to wet days by the British farmer. . . .

I am, &c.,

G. BRYCE.

The demand for labour of all kinds, and the high wages paid during the year 1881 in Manitoba, are vividly explained in the following extract from a letter recently (October, 1881) received from Winnipeg. Increased activity is expected to prevail next spring:—

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Oct. 10, 1881.

A limited number of good mechanics of all kinds would have no difficulty in finding employment in Ontario, though here the great demand is for those connected with the building trades, such as carpenters, masons, &c. This city and towns throughout this province have been growing this year at a rate that is astonishing everybody, but the prospects are that next year will witness a far greater growth, and astonish even ourselves. More would have been done this season, but the men could not be had to do it. Every day in the papers, and at the employment agencies, and in the shop windows, advertisements ask for carpenters, painters, masons, labourers, &c., and they cannot be had. Only the other day a gentleman said he paid a man 2 dollars 50 cents (10s. 5d.) per cord for sawing and splitting wood, and then could only keep him half a day at most. I have not the slightest doubt that if 2,000 or 3,000 labourers were to arrive here to-morrow they could all find employment inside of twenty-four hours on the various railways, on farms, and on the city works, and at wages of 2 dols. 25 cents per day. You could see half-a-dozen notices of corporations and different parties, in walking up the street, advertising for 200 or 500 or 1,000 men wanted at the above wages. For lack of carpenters and masons, buildings that should have been done long ago are still unfinished, and in some cases men are now working night and day at them in order to get them done as soon as possible. I know of one instance where a merchant has had some 40,000 dollars' worth of goods lying in the freight sheds for the past five or six weeks waiting for the completion of a store that was to have been done at that time, but which will take some little time yet before it is ready, though men are working at it night and day. Carpenters get 3 dols. to 3 dols. 50 cents (12s. 6d. to 14s. 7d.) per day. Bricklayers, 5 dols. to 7 dols. (20s. 10d. to 29s. 2d.) per day, and their attendants 2 dols. 50 cents (10s. 5d.). Farm hands get from 25 dols. to 35 dols. (£5 4s. 2d. to £7 5s. 10d.) per month and board. Servant girls get from 12 dols. to 25 dols. (£2 10s. to £5) per month and board, and cooks from 50 dols. to 75 dols. (£10 to £15) per month and board.

The only classes it would be advisable to come out this fall are good general servants. Girls, and any amount of them almost, can get good situations any time, and if they are smart and intelligent, and of pleasing face and

figure, they are not likely to be here but a very short time before they have a husband and a home of their own in this land where there are four or five men for each woman. A few cooks could also get situations now. But in the spring, so as to reach here any time in the latter part of April, and after, all through the season, you can send along as many labourers, farm hands, and men to take up farms as you please, with the full assurance that they need not be idle five minutes after getting here, unless of their own accord. A fairly liberal sprinkling of mechanics will be wanted; and just to give you an idea of the demand for girls, I may say that one of our city papers estimated that if 1,000 were to come here they could all be provided with situations. Many of the men come here without means, work for a year or so till they have saved a little money, and then take up farms; and when the land has only to be turned over to raise crops of 30 to 35 bushels of wheat, 40 of barley and peas, 50 to 60 of oats, 300 to 400 of potatoes, and 500 to 800 of roots, and from 2½ to 4 tons of hay per acre, and I don't know of anything to pay them much better. I know of men who started here three years ago with nothing, and putting in a little on their farm the first spring and working out the remainder of the year, who have now made enough to have paid off any debt they had contracted, and had their living and got up a comfortable little house, and, in addition to having a farm they would not sell for less than four to six thousand dollars, have some money in the bank, not to mention the stock and implements they have become possessed of in the meantime.

The following extract from a letter that appeared in the press recently from a gentleman well acquainted with the country bears upon this point:—

I am sure it will be within your knowledge that many erroneous ideas prevail respecting the climate of the parts of Canada referred to. As a matter of fact, it does not differ from that of Minnesota, Dakota, and others of the Western States. Fruits and other produce that are grown in the latter can be raised in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, and it may not be generally known that wild hops, and fruits such as strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, and cherries, grow most luxuriantly there. The hops are used to make yeast by the settlers, and the fruits are preserved. . . . I can conscientiously state, after an experience of eight years, that the former (Manitoba) is undoubtedly healthy and favourable for general agricultural operations.

As a cattle district . . . by housing in the winter, there is nothing to prevent cattle being successfully raised in any part of Canada or the North-West Territories. Last winter, when thousands of cattle died from exposure in Montana territory (United States), our cattle on the Canadian side around Fort McLeod wintered out, and were reported to be in excellent condition. . . .

In Manitoba a homestead exemption law was passed in 1872, which exempts from seizure for debt 160 acres of land, house, stables, barns, furniture, tools, farm implements in use, one cow, two oxen, one horse, four sheep, two pigs, and 30 days' provender for same.

The following extracts from a report made by the Hon. Sir Alexander Galt, G.C.M.G., the High Commissioner for Canada in England, upon his visit this year (1881) to Manitoba and the North West, contain much valuable information on the subject :—

With reference to the climate the evidence obtained from every person interrogated was eminently satisfactory. The weather was undoubtedly cold, but dry, with little wind ; the snowfall not heavy, rarely exceeding twelve to fourteen inches during the winter ; scarcely a day in winter when a man could not do outdoor work all day, and generally preferable to the milder weather of Ontario, where wet, mingled with the cold, produced much greater discomfort and positive loss of time. With reference to the alleged prevalence of early frosts, the experience of the settlers leads them to sow very early, as soon as the surface of the soil is free from frost, the continued thawing of the subsoil furnishing moisture to the plant, which the warm dry weather brings to maturity by the middle of August. One point in this connection may be stated, which is not generally considered, that the high latitude of the North-West gives a much longer day and continued sun-warmth than in Ontario, and consequently produces a much more rapid growth to maturity.

In respect to the water supply, it is abundant in the district visited, but inferior in quality. . . . It was, however, found that the settlers experienced no difficulty in procuring good water for their own use by simply sinking wells to a depth of eight to ten feet, the soil acting as a filter and leaving pure cold water free from deleterious substances. On this point also there seems no ground for anticipating future complaint or objection. . . .

With regard to timber for building and fuel, there appears to be sufficient for the present wants of the early settlers. All the banks of the rivers and streams are wooded, and the small lakes are almost uniformly fringed with belts of small trees. . . . With reference to timber for building purposes, it will certainly be had at reasonable rates, as the facilities for obtaining it far surpass those of the prairie States of the Union, where the absence of forest has not yet been found to offer any sensible bar to successful settlement.

Lastly, there is the important question of fuel supply—an article of primary importance in a climate as severe as the North-West Territory of the Dominion. For the present, in many parts of the districts visited, and for periods more or less limited, there will undoubtedly be found a supply of firewood from the existing growth of timber, and no hesitation in promoting immediate settlement need be felt on that point. . . . Providence has however provided for the future supply of this essential article, through the vast deposits of coal and lignite which are believed to exist very generally, and which have already been discovered on the Souris River, about 200 miles from Winnipeg, and also for several hundred miles from Edmonton to Fort McLeod, along the skirts of the prairie, near the base of the Rocky Mountains. . . . I am therefore of opinion that no apprehension need be felt as to the future fuel supply of the North-West.

Reviewing all the foregoing considerations, I am satisfied that the efforts of the Government may continue to be devoted with every energy to the promotion of the settlement of the North-West Territories, in the full assurance that these efforts cannot fail to produce the happiness and welfare of all who may by their means be induced to settle in Canada.

I will now, with a short summing up, conclude my lecture. The land can be easily tilled, crops are abundant; the surface of the country is generally rolling, thus almost draining itself; groves and clumps of trees abound, the rivers are fringed with timber, good water can be found in sufficient quantities, minerals are placed by nature where men in future years will require them. These facts are surely enough to prove that the Canadian North-West is the land for the farmer, the dairyman, and others, and they are vouched for by a host of independent witnesses, men who have visited the country, and given their account of its actualities and possibilities, not to mention the settlers themselves, who are unanimous in their praise of a region that has raised so many of them from the abject position of feudal serfs to that of freemen. I will here quote from the report of the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, recently issued: "As affording facilities for immigrants settling in the North-West, it may be mentioned that the Canadian Pacific Railway is already open for passenger and freight traffic as far west as Brandon, and during the coming season of 1882 it is intended to construct 500 miles more from that point to the west, making altogether nearly 700 miles of railway west of Red River. Facilities for settlement which were previously unattainable are thus opened, and the expected almost immediate consequence will be the influx of a large population. The climate is as healthy as any in the world, while the soil is among the richest and the best. It is particularly fitted for the production of wheat. This grain has, in fact, been grown for many years in succession without the use of any fertilisers. This has been done within the small enclosures of the original Selkirk settlement, since their first colonisation over half a century ago, the soil showing no diminution of vigour. The quality of the wheat grown is also a special feature. It is particularly suited for the new patent flour process, so-called, and it commands a higher price in the eastern markets by at least 10 or 15 per cent. over other wheats which are grown further to the east or south. The weight of this wheat averages from 63lb. to 65lb.

to the bushel, and in addition to this fact of the quality and weight, it gives the largest yield, and it may be grown more cheaply here than in any other country in the world."

In a recent Budget speech of the Canadian Minister of Finance, in speaking of the money spent by the country on the Canadian Pacific Railway, he said, in defending the enormous expenditure, "that it is desirable to give the people of the old world, and the inhabitants of our own Dominion, free homes in the great North-West. We could realise in a few years, if they were put up to public auction, the money that would pay back not only the expenditure up to the present, but down to the completion of the railway. But it will come in the future, our public debt will be decreased, our annual interest will be reduced, and we shall occupy the proud position of being able to offer to the industrious and honest man, who cannot find work in the old world, a home here, with free lands, a country girdled with railways, and with a canal system the best in the world, with institutions that will protect their lives, their properties, and their rights, and that will afford a refuge for the oppressed man, if there be any such in any part of the old world. (!!) We will open our arms to them all, and bid them welcome, and make the Dominion of Canada, as I said in my closing remarks in a former speech, what Providence intended it to be—one of the greatest and richest countries in the world." After such a burst of eloquence as that, the only thing for me to do is to hide my diminished head and sit down.

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